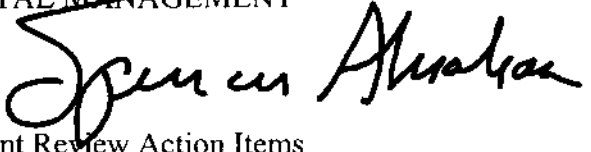




The Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

February 4, 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR JESSIE ROBERSON
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
OFFICE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

FROM: SPENCER ABRAHAM 
SUBJECT: Environmental Management Review Action Items

Thank you for your memorandum and your Review Team's report on the "Top-to-Bottom Review" of the Environmental Management Program.

As you know, I called for an in-depth review of program last year after being presented with the old plan for cleaning up the Department's Cold War nuclear sites that had a timetable of some 70 years and a cost of \$300 billion. The program has involved many good people and good intentions. But a timeline of 70 years means decades of treading water on environmental hazards that need to be eliminated, not just managed. It is not fair to tell people who live near these sites that if everything works right, maybe their grandchildren will live in communities that are risk free.

Therefore, I strongly agree with you and your team's assessment on the urgent need for fundamental change in how the Department of Energy goes about its cleanup responsibilities. I also agree with the approach for fundamental reform you outline. As I understand it, based on the *Review*, you recommend:

- Reducing as expeditiously as possible the most serious risks to the communities in which the Department has sites;
- Pursuing this task with the sense of urgency that surrounded the development of these nuclear complexes 50 years ago;
- Streamlining cleanup so that funding currently spent on routine maintenance and security can instead be put to use for expedited cleanup;
- Restructuring our own internal processes to focus our efforts in this fashion;



- Reviewing the remaining risks on a case-by-case basis, working with State and local officials to determine the most appropriate remediation schedules and approaches; and
- Working with all other interested parties – stakeholders, communities, regulators and State and local level elected officials, and Members of Congress -- to build the necessary consensus for making these fundamental changes.

I agree with you that it is past time for us to overhaul our priorities for performing our cleanup responsibilities in this fashion. I also agree with you that this will require the cooperation and support of many other interested parties who play critical roles in the setting of these priorities.

I am pleased to inform you that in recognition of the importance of this enterprise, the President's Budget for FY 2003 proposes the creation of a special "Expedited Cleanup Account." This Account, if established, will be a major tool for implementing the approach you have recommended.

Accordingly, I direct you to do the following:

1. Immediately begin discussions with stakeholders, communities, regulators, State and local elected officials, and Members of Congress, to discuss appropriate ways for us to refocus our efforts and resources so as to accomplish these objectives;
2. Work with appropriate Members of Congress to implement the new "Expedited Cleanup Account" proposed in the President's Budget;
3. Immediately begin the process of undertaking any internal reforms necessary to remove self-imposed EM barriers to success;
4. Report to me any Secretarial actions, orders or legislative requests that need to be undertaken to execute the policy approach outlined above.

I appreciate the exceptional leadership you have shown in developing the plan outlined above for fundamental reform of the EM Program. I look forward to your work as you move ahead to develop specific approaches for implementation.

cc: Under Secretary Robert G. Card